

SHIMANO

Gravel[★]
Muster

STAGE RACE

EAST
MACDONNELL RANGES . NT



EVENT PROGRAM

21-24 AUGUST 2025 / EAST MACDONNELL RANGES . NT

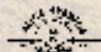
Ride it... Race it... Experience it... It is time to Muster it!



skritch LABS

SHIMANO

SCHWALBE



WELCOME TO THE SHIMANO GRAVEL MUSTER STAGE RACE!



We are thrilled to welcome you to the heart of the outback, to a timeless landscape where endless skies meet red earth, and the road stretches toward the horizon with quiet promise and challenge.

This is a place of raw beauty and subtle shifts, where every kilometre tells a story and every rider finds their own rhythm. The land will test your spirit, but it will also reward you with a sense of wonder that lingers long after the dust settles.

Yet the Gravel Muster is more than just the ride — it's the community we build out here. Around the campfire, over shared meals, and when pedaling kilometer after kilometer under a burning sun, it's the laughter, stories, and friendships that truly define this event and your experience. Whether you're here to race hard or just soak it all in, out here, we're all in it together.

Thank you for being part of this iconic event. We're honoured to have you riding with us — let the adventure commence.

The Rapid Ascent Team



Welcome from the Northern Territory Government

Welcome to the 2025 Shimano Gravel Muster Stage Race, where world-class gravel riding meets rugged landscapes.

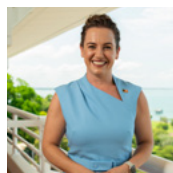
Set against the stunning backdrop of the Red Centre, this year's Shimano Gravel Muster invites you to experience Central Australia like few others do. We're excited to welcome close to 100 riders from across the country to this year's event.

From 21-24 August, you'll ride through some of the most iconic outback terrain in the Red Centre, while camping on working cattle stations, covering remote tracks, and spending your evenings sharing stories around the fire. This is a real adventure, and the ride of a lifetime. This event gives you a front-row seat to the Northern Territory's ancient ranges, hidden waterholes, and vast open skies — and a great reason to explore even more of this incredible region once the race is done and the dust settles.

My government is proud to support the Shimano Gravel Muster Stage Race through the NT Major Events Company's event funding program. We are focused on delivering a year of action, certainty, and security while continuing our commitment to rebuild the economy and restore our unique Territory lifestyle.

Events like this not only showcase the NT's natural beauty but also deliver lasting social and economic benefits by drawing visitors from across the country to our great regions.

While you're here, be sure to experience everything the Red Centre has to offer and take in the unique landscape on your journey.



Good luck and enjoy the ride.

Lia Finocchiaro
Chief Minister

Acting Minister for Major Events, Acting Minister for Tourism and Hospitality



Welcome from the Alice Springs Town Council

Welcome to Alice Springs and the 2025 Shimano Gravel Muster — where two wheels meet wide-open country! There's something magical about riding out here. For the next four days, you'll swap the hustle of everyday life for endless horizons, red dirt roads and the kind of landscapes that make you forget to breathe.

This event is a game-changer — Australia's first gravel stage race — and it's already carving out a new chapter in our town's long love affair with cycling. The East MacDonnell Ranges will be your playground, and we can promise there'll be no shortage of adventure along the way.

Alice Springs has a way of getting under your skin: the big skies, the rugged trails, and the community that cheers you on. We hope you soak up every moment of it.



So clip in, settle in, and enjoy the ride. Welcome to the Muster — let's make it one to remember!

Mayor Matt Paterson
Alice Springs Town Council



SHIMANO
GRX

Di2
DIGITAL INTEGRATED INTELLIGENCE



**UNTETHERED.
UNSTOPPABLE.**

EVENT SCHEDULE

Wednesday 20 August

All Day	Competitors arrive and airport shuttle operates. (Pre purchased only)
5:00pm – 7:00pm	Happy Hour drinks – meet and greet at the Mercure Hotel Bar (optional)

Thursday 21 August

All morning	Competitors arrive and airport shuttle operates. (Pre purchased only)
9:00am – 11:00am	Rider registration – at the Mercure
11:15am	Rider briefing and Acknowledgement of Country – at the Mercure
12:40pm	2.5km Prologue Individual Time Trial - WAVE STARTS - Blatherskite Park
1:30pm	48km Stage 1 - WAVE STARTS – Blatherskite Park
4:30pm – 6:00pm	Sunset drinks – at the Alice Springs Brewery pop-up bar at Flagon Hill
6:30pm	Welcome dinner – at the Mercure, Alice Springs

Friday 22 August

6:45am	148km Stage 2 ROLLING STARTS – at the Alice Springs Telegraph Station
from 6:00pm	Rider's dinner and presentations – at Hale River Homestead

Saturday 23 August

8:00am	90km Stage 3 RACE START – at the Hale River Homestead
from 6:00pm	Rider's dinner and presentations – at Ross River Homestead

Sunday 24 August

8:00am	95km Stage 4 ROLLING START – at the Ross River Homestead
2:00pm – 5:00pm	Post race drinks at the Alice Springs Brewery
from 6:00pm	Presentations dinner and ceremony – at the Mercure, Alice Springs

Monday 25 August

All Day	Competitors depart for home or further tourism
Airport shuttle operates.	(Pre purchased only)

RACE HQ at the Mercure Alice Springs Resort

34 Stott Terrace, Alice Springs. Ph: 08 8951 4545

The Mercure Alice Springs Resort is our Race HQ and will be social hub of the event - everyone is welcome to come and enjoy the facilities whilst we are in Alice Springs on Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday. This is the location of the Registration, the Rider Briefing and Presentation Dinners.



Additional notes about the Mercure

- Breakfast will be available from 5:00am on Friday 22nd
- Guests are able to store your bike boxes and additional luggage whilst we away from Alice Springs
- Guests are able to park your cars within the Mercure grounds whilst we are away from Alice Springs

REGISTRATION

9:00am to 11:00am on Thursday in The Mercure courtyard, on the grass in the middle of the hotel.

At registration you will receive:

- Number plate: attach your number plate to your seat post with the zip ties provided so the number faces backwards.
- Timing chip: attach to your front forks (low down near the axle) with the zip ties provided
- 2x bag tags with your name and race number
- Sponsored gifts
- Merchandise - pre-purchased and for sale (including gas cannisters so you don't have to fly with them)



RIDER BRIEFING AND WELCOME

11:15am on Thursday in the Mercure courtyard (same location as registration)

All riders are strongly encouraged to attend as we acknowledge the traditional owners of the country, introduce key people involved in the event and provide final event updates and information for the days to come. Spectators welcome.

The briefing will go for approx. 45min so we recommend competitors come to the briefing ready to ride to the day 1 start straight afterwards. (Prologue starts at 12:40pm and it is a 15min ride from the Mercure).

EVENT CONTACTS

Emergency / serious issues: Sam Maffett, Event Manager 0400 001 786 or John Jacoby, Race Director: 0408 035 261

If we are out of range try our off-site contact in Victoria: Bridget Jacoby, Rapid Ascent Director: 0400 322 884.

COMPETITOR SERVICES

Luggage Transportation

We will take your luggage from Alice Springs to each of the outback stations for you. Please be aware of the following requirements:

- Please keep your luggage to a minimum – leave your bike box and extra items in Alice Springs and only give us what you need.
- If you are not camping there is a 15kg limit per person.
- If you are bringing your own camping equipment then a 25kg limit applies (we cannot carry huge swags, small set ups only)
- Attach the bag tags given to you at registration to your bags and write on your name and race number.
- Luggage will be collected from the following locations in Alice Springs on Friday 22nd
 - The Mercure. Leave at reception by 6:15am
 - The Crowne Plaza. Leave at reception by 6:15am
 - The Day 2 start line at the Telegraph Station at 6:45am
- Luggage will be at the finish line each day ready for you when you arrive
- Luggage will be collected from the Hale River and Ross River stations at 7:30am the morning we depart

Day 1 bag transfer: We will receive items at the day 1 start line to be taken to the day 1 finish (eg. jumper, hat...). Just make sure your name / race number is marked on them.

On site medical team

We will have a specialist emergency doctor with us for the duration of the event, Dr Jerome is an athlete and understand the needs of competitors in events like these. He will generally be located at the 1st and 2nd water points each day before making a base at the finish line for the mid / tail end of the field. Please try and get to him if you need assistance, otherwise we will assist and respond to emergency issues out on the course.

Dr Jerome has asked that you please keep your Medicare card or card number with you while riding (take a photo of it) so they can register you as a patient, record notes into their clinical software and bulk bill for treatments (treatment will not cost you anything). You are welcome to discuss any particular concerns or scenarios with him at the competitor briefing on Thursday.

The doctor will be staying with us for the duration of the event and will be available between 5:30pm and 6:30pm at Hale River and at Ross River Stations to provide post race care and advice.

Bike repairs

Chris from the **Alice Springs Bicycle Centre** will be set up at the Mercure during registration and can help with last minute bike tuning and spares. For more significant work head to the store at: 2/30 Stuart Hwy

Once we leave Alice Springs will not have a designated mechanic travelling with the event so repairs will be a matter of helping each other. We will provide a work stand, decent sized Super-B tool kit, floor pumps and other tools, combined with a broad range of Schwalbe products as explained below.

Schwalbe service stations

Our good friends from Schwalbe (Bike Box) have equipped us with plenty of tyres, tubes, valves, canisters, sealant, chain lube and other spares to help keep you rolling. These items as well as tools and floor pumps will be available at the main water point and at the finish line after racing each day. Items will be sold at event special prizes and we'll endeavour to get you back on the road as best we can.

SCHWALBE ➤

Krush Bike Wash

We will have bottles of the Krush water-less bike wash and a bunch of rags so you can clean your bike at the end of each day.



Airport Transfers (to/from)

Airport shuttles booked through Rapid Ascent will be conducted by [Alice Silver Passenger Services](#):

- Arrival - They will be at the airport on the 13th, 14th and 15th ready to pick you up if you have supplied your flight number.
- Departure - They will collect you from your hotel based upon the flight details you've given them. They will send you an e-mail with your pick up time.

FREE Professional photos during the event

We are delighted to have a local professional photographer James Tudor from Forktail to shoot photos during the event. James will be at different sections of the course each day to capture you in action, and will then upload his photos to a shared drop box for you to download and share with the world! Simply visit the drop box folder linked below, download the shots you like and then share them with your friends – please tag #gravelmuster and @RapidAscent and @james_forktail so we're included!

Please note: James can't be everywhere at once, he will try to get a few photos of each person across the entire event so please be patient if he misses you on one day!

Photos will be available from here

- <https://tinyurl.com/3zfa2vr2> to access all photos via separate drop box folders, OR
- www.forktail.com.au where you can search for photos of a specific race number

WEATHER

The climate in Alice Springs for the month of August is generally very pleasant – although it can still get very warm when you are outside, exercising in full sun with no shade (at last year's event it was 35deg every day!). Equally so, it can get very cold overnight and in the mornings. We recommend wearing multiple layers and adjusting to suit. Also be wary of sunburn and dehydration, it is a very dry and arid heat that sucks the moisture from you. Sunscreen, hat, sunglasses and lip saver are a must.

Avg daily max 25°C Avg night min 6°C Avg rainy days 3.1 Avg cloudy days 7.6 Ave sunrise 6:55am / Sunset 6:20pm

SAFETY IN ALICE SPRINGS

Alice Spring is a wonderful, vibrant city with a big history. But just like most cities it has its difficulties and social issues that visitors need to be aware of. Here are some tips to help ensure your safety whilst in the area:

- We are firmly of the belief that the town is safe in the daytime. Normal precautions apply but its generally fine.
- Do not go out solo at night, don't go into the CBD after dark. If you have to be out after dark then remain with others.
- Be aware of personal effects when in town – don't leave your bikes unattended and just be mindful of flashing around big bling like camera...
- Use common sense and simply be aware of your surroundings.
- Store your bike out of site in your room when you are not riding it.

Alice Springs has received a lot of bad publicity over the last year or two which has amplified people's awareness of the issues within the community. But in the most part the situation is not especially different to how it always is, and how many multicultural cities around the world are. It is safe provided you use a bit of common sense. The recommended accommodation is all gated and secure, and the event schedule means you do not need to be out after dark by yourself. And once we've left Alice Springs we'll have the whole continent to play with day and night because the bush areas are safe.



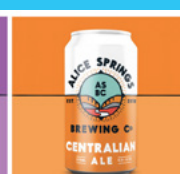
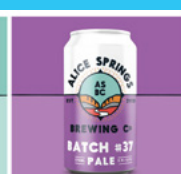
EXPLORE OUR BEERS

Our range of beers are made for the thirsty. And we know a thing or two about being parched here at our brewery in Alice Springs.

Take your pick of quenchers - Summer Ale, American Pale Ale, Australian Pale Ale, Mid-strength Lager, Stout, IPA, Double IPA, Sour Beers and our ever popular non-beers, a Hard Ginger Beer & Hard Lemonade.

All handcrafted at the one and only independent brewery in Alice Springs.

39 PALM CIRCUIT, ALICE SPRINGS



SOCIAL SCENE AND PRESENTATIONS

A range of social functions are scheduled to ensure you have a great time off the bike as well as on! Nightly meals will be had together and will include a short presentation of the day's results to announce category winners as well as some spot prizes that anyone can win. Supporters welcome, however any non-riders need to pre-purchase meal tickets from Rapid Ascent prior to August 12th.

Wednesday 20th

5:00pm – 7:00pm. Meet the Race Directors and event staff - at The Mercure bar.

This is a great chance to meet the Rapid Ascent team and your fellow riders to chat about the race ahead.

6:30pm onwards. Dinner available at the Mercure's restaurant or head to the Alice Springs Brewery for a feed.

Congregate with other riders for a pre-raced dinner - both venues recommended.

Thursday 21st

4:30pm – 6:00pm Alice Springs Brewery pop-up bar.

Located right at the end of the stage on a hill 'out west' of town. Free beers on us to welcome you to the Red Centre.



6:30pm onwards. Event buffet dinner at The Mercure + Stage 1 presentations

A hearty buffet will be served outdoors on the grass - a great chance to meet other competitors and fuel up for the riding to come.

Friday 22nd

6:00pm onwards. Riders' dinner + Stage 2 presentations

Regroup with friends old and new as we celebrate the end of a huge day with a casual BBQ buffet and beers around the campfires.

Saturday 23rd

6:00pm onwards Rider's dinner + stage 3 presentations

Ross River Homestead is in a beautiful setting with the cliffs of the Gorge all around us and we'll host another memorable (and filling) buffet dinner under the stars.

Sunday 24th

2:00pm – 5:00pm Alice Springs Brewery finish line celebrations

The finish line is in the middle of the beer garden making this a great way celebrate our return to civilisation!

6:00pm onwards Presentation dinner at The Mercure + final presentations

This is a must-attend event as we celebrate the end of an incredible 4 days of riding in the Red Centre with a hearty buffet, great stories and good times outdoors at the Mercure.

ACCOMMODATION

As the event moves from point to point, here is a summary of the various accommodation locations:

- Before and including Thursday 21st - accommodation in Alice Springs - riders book your own.
- Friday 22nd - at Hale River Station
- Saturday 23rd - at Ross River Station
- On and after Sunday 24th - accommodation in Alice Springs - riders book your own.

General notes about Hale River and Ross River Stations.

1. First - these are outback cattle stations who also host some camping and accommodation. This is definitely NOT 5 STAR ACCOMMODATION. There are toilets, showers, electricity, food, drinks... but we can't guarantee that everything will work all the time.
2. Second - you'll probably go to bed with grit between your toes, sand in your hair and dust in your eyes - be ready for it because that is what life in the outback is like. Get ready to rough it a bit!
3. Third - what we can guarantee is a great sense of satisfaction and awe at your surroundings and the people you're experiencing it with. This is why you're here - to revel in the differences and the challenges it brings, becoming a better person as a result.

When staying at either Hale River or Ross River Stations, riders will be accommodated via one of pre-booked options explained below. See the camp captain when you arrive and we'll get you sorted.

- **In a room or cabin.** These are all pre-allocated - we will show you where you are staying. Linen, bedding and towels provided.
- **In a Bunkroom** (Ross River only). You must BYO sleeping bag and pillow slip.
- **BYO camp gear.** You must bring all your own camping gear (tent, mattress, sleeping bag...) and we will show you where to set it up within the camping area.
- **Rapid Ascent provided camping gear.** To be set up in the camping area. BYO sleeping bag and pillow slip.

Further details for those using Rapid Ascent camping equipment (approx ~48 people are camping in our RA camp gear!):

- We will provide you with a 2-man tent, a comfortable 10cm thick mattress, a pillow and a camp chair each.
- SET UP: We will have a number of tents set up when you arrive - especially for riders are well and truly buckled. If you have the energy to help us pitch your tent that'd be very much appreciated
- PACK UP: Equally so, we'd really appreciate it if you help us pack down your tents if you can. We're 100% there to help as well.



General notes about facilities:

- All riders have equal access to the shared facilities – such as toilets, showers, the pool and more.
- Please be VERY WATER CONSCIOUS! We are in an arid area and water is very precious.
- The cabins at Ross River are 700m away from the camping and dining area – the event centre will be based at the camping area
- It can be very cold out in the desert at night so bring plenty of warm clothes for the evenings / nights.
- There are a number of hiking trails and places to explore surrounding each station – ask the camp captain for some ideas
- There will be designated power points to charge your phones, bike computers, lights... Please bring your own USB boxes and leads. (We also recommend bringing 1-2 power banks and using those instead of the mains power)
- There is no phone reception or WIFI at either station. We will have a Starlink if any emergency communications are needed.
- Feel free to grab a chair and hang out at the bar / campfire / dining area and make yourselves at home!



- drink when thirsty
- don't drink when not thirsty

hydration
SPORT DRINK MIX

Hydrates faster than water

lemon + lime

real athletes.
real food.

90% of electrolytes in sweat is sodium

always

We use science to inform what will help your body perform its best. We use nature to make it taste as good as possible so you'll enjoy it. Nobody knows your body better than you. But nobody knows sports nutrition better than us. The human body is complex but the solutions to help it perform aren't. We follow this rule when we create products that solve problems and simple ingredients that each have a purpose !!

w: skatchlabs.com.au - p: 02 9417 5755

MEALS

Refer to the table below to see what meals are provided by us (basically all the meals once we leave Alice Springs):

A summary of the meals provided includes:

- **Breakfasts:** breakfasts are provided when you are staying at the outback stations on day 3 and day 4. These will be cooked breakfasts with eggs, toast, cereals, fruits... with sufficient food to get you down the road.
- **Lunches:** we will have a packed lunch for you at the main water points on day 2, day 3 and day 4. This will include things like healthy wraps, bakery products and fruit. See the course description text to see which water point will have the lunches.
- **Dinners:** all dinners during the event are provided on day 1, 2, 3 and 4. These will be large buffet style functions with range of protein and carb based meals. Yum.
- **Riding snacks:** A range of Skratch hydration and nutrition products will be available to keep you sustained whilst on the bike including high carb / electrolyte drinks, bars and chews as well as cake, lollies, fruit and more at the checkpoints. You are welcome to bring your own if you have brands and products you prefer.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	On-course snacks
DAY 1 Thur 22 Aug	-	-	YES	YES
DAY 2 Fri 23 Aug	-	YES	YES	YES
DAY 3 Sat 24 Aug	YES	YES	YES	YES
DAY 4 Sun 25 Aug	YES	YES	YES	YES

What's NOT included:

- Alcohol (a bar will be selling beer and wine at each dinner venue)
- After riding snacks – eg. if you finish riding at 3pm and want something to eat straight away... Hale and Ross River have cafés selling very limited items, or plan ahead and bring your own.
- Barista Coffee! We know – it's a cardinal sin to run a bike race and not have proper coffee (but this is the outback after all!). Pack your AeroPress or stick to instant!



THE RACE COURSES

The riding in Central Australia has to be seen to be believed, with slow but subtle changes it's a captivating landscape that has plenty of variety, interest and awe. We look forward to showing it to you.

THE ROADS

The route has lots of variety, from wide gravel 'highways' offering multiple lines to narrower double tracks that take more concentration. In the most part we're on very well formed 2WD roads that offer a generally smooth surface and that can be ridden at speed. There are sections of corrugations, loose sand and more rocky terrain where you need to watch your wheel - you will 'hunt the road' looking for the smoothest line. This is harsh riding and on the whole the roads are 'hard' with little give in them.

RACE VS CRUISE STAGES

Each day includes a number of timed and untimed segments – we call it a Rally Format. This allows you test your mettle against each other during the timed sections, and then slow down, socialise and savour the experience during the cruise sections. Some people will ride the timed and untimed sections at the same speed – that's totally fine as well! The race results each day will be determined by your total time in the timed sections only, including the prologue.

The start / end of each section will be marked with signs saying Start / End of Time Section, as well as timing equipment to record your progress. **NOTE: the timing equipment does not span the whole width of the road so you must keep left to go over the timing mats!**



COURSE MARKING

The course will be lightly marked as follows:

- Junctions will be marked with large red arrows and pink tape
- Markings will only be at junctions – there will not be any intermediary markings between junctions
- If you get to a junction that is not marked eg. a 4WD track crosses the more main 2WD road - then continue on the main road. Any turns off the most main road will be clearly marked.
- If in doubt at any time then CHECK THE MAPS ON YOUR PHONE / BIKE COMPUTER!

MAPPING AND GPS FILES

All competitors MUST have the map for ALL 4 STAGES loaded onto either a bike computer or a mapping app on your phone that works when offline. We recommend riders use the RIDE WITH GPS app because i) the maps display the water pts and segment start / finish as well, ii) the maps work when out of reception* iii) they are rider friendly with a heap of features like elevation profiles, surface type and allow GPX exports...

- To load ALL Gravel Muster maps simply [CLICK HERE https://ridewithgps.com/collections/4913522](https://ridewithgps.com/collections/4913522) or scan this QR code -->

* NOTE: to save for offline usage you need to have a Premium Subscription, this is only \$9.99 for the month or activate the free 7 day trial when you get to Alice Springs.



GPS FILES: You can also download the GPX files for each stage from Ride with GPS so you can import them into your bike computer or other mapping apps. (Open the map for each stage then select 'export GPX file').

WATER POINTS

Numerous water points will be set up along each stage with support and assistance available from staff and volunteers. Waterpoints located in untimed sections will be more substantial than those set up in a timed section. All water points will be manned.

Waterpoints will be up to 30km apart so we definitely recommend riders take plenty of hydration and nutrition with you in between water points. If you have your own preferred race nutrition then you should carry that with you. Your luggage and other personal items will not be available at the water points so you should start (and end) the day with all the clothing, spares and extra items you need for the whole day.

Waterpoints will consist of the following:

- Water and Skratch Hydration Sports Drink powder so you can mix your own
- A range of Skratch nutrition products including bars and chews
- Fruit cake, lollies, chips, Shapes, bananas and other basic foods
- Squirt Bike Lube
- Maxiblock sunscreen

skratch LABS

Schwalbe Service Station – the principle water point each day will have additional bike accessories to help keep you on the road. See notes on page 5 for more.

SCHWALBE 

MANDATORY GEAR AND SAFETY

We take the safety of all participants, volunteers, staff and stakeholder very seriously. Please be aware of the following safety requirements:

Mandatory gear to be carried by all riders – this forms part of the race rules:

- A rear facing red flashing light that is operating for ALL stages
- A safety / space blanket and first aid kit (minimum contents: 2 x crepe bandages, 6 x wound closure strips, 1 x triangular bandage, 2 x non-stick wound dressing pads and a pair of surgical gloves).
- The course route downloaded onto either a bike computer or a mapping app on your phone that works when you are out of phone reception. (If using a phone we recommend either Ride with GPS).

Start / finish / withdrawals / cut offs:

- All riders **MUST GET YOUR NAMES TICKED OFF** with the Start Official 10mins prior to the start of each day.
- Riders must start within 5 mins of the advertised start time – otherwise you will be unable to start at all.
- If you withdraw for any reason you **MUST** advise a marshal ASAP. This is really important as otherwise you will be assumed missing and a search will be commenced.
- Riders must roll through the finish line at the end of all stages and **REPORT IN TO THE FINISH MARSHAL**
- **CUT OFFS:** All riders must be off the course by 1845 each day (this is 30mins after sunset). If you are not at the finish by this time we will come looking for you.

Other notes:

- Normal road rules apply at all times. All roads remain open to other users and we will see some other cars.
- We will have sweep vehicles to collect up the dead and those who have major mechanicals of the bike or body.
- There is no mobile phone reception outside of 10km from Alice Springs, so if you have an incident and need our support we suggest following these steps:
 - Alert other riders that you need help. Note your specific location (eg. the km point into the course.)
 - Ask someone to remain with the injured whilst others continue to one of the water points for assistance (remember that the nearest help may be behind you).
 - If remaining in place, ensure you have sufficient clothing, food and water... move into some shade.

SELF CARE - It's up to YOU

Rapid Ascent provides a 'duty of care' over all competitors, volunteers and stakeholders. We will ensure that the race is run as it is described, with water, support and assistance as explained in this event program. Where conditions are beyond 'normal' (e.g. hotter than 32 deg) we will extend our duty of care over participants to help you handle the conditions.

BUT it is also up to YOU the participants to use common sense and take care of yourselves and each other. YOU are ultimately responsible for yourself so think and act carefully, for example, making sure you: have sufficient hydration with you to get to the next waterpoint, dress appropriately for a long day in the sun, eat and drink enough before, during and after each stage, handle yourselves correctly if you are hot, care for your wrists and other contact points so you handle the distance... etc.

Make no mistake, the course is hard, you will get hot and be deeply challenged - especially with the cumulative effect of 4 days of riding. This event may well break you down but it'll rebuild you stronger, wilder and with a sparkle in your eye and the knowledge that you have what it takes. Ride it. Race it. Experience it. You CAN muster it.

SHIMANO

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NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT

Proudly supported by
MAJOR EVENTS COMPANY

Alice Springs
TOWN COUNCIL

rapid ASCENT
Racing Event Management

SCHWALBE 

pedla

skratch LABS

Mercure
HOTELS
ALICE SPRINGS
RESORT

ALICE SPRINGS
BREWING Co

SHIMANO GRX

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Here is a summary of each day, identifying water points, timed sections and more. All distances are +/- 5km.

DAY 1: ITT prologue

When: Thursday 21st August, Wave starts from 12:40PM.

Total Distance: 2.6km (10m ascent). [Ride with GPS map and profile HERE.](#)

Start / Finish Line: Next to the BMX track in Blatherskite Park, (5km south of Mercure). [Red Centre BMX on Google Maps.](#)

Riding surfaces: Mix of gravel roads, double track and CX twisties.

Race format: Individual time trial – your total time around the course is your race time.

Start process: Riders will be set off in number order according to your race plate, one rider every 15 sec.

A short prologue will be conducted as a precursor to stage 1 to let riders get warmed up AND to determine a seeding position for the wave start groups for stage 1 (see below). Feel free to race the prologue if you want to start in a faster start group for stage 1, or simply cruise the prologue and use it as a way to check your bike and body before the riding to come.

The course will go around the perimeter of Blatherskite Park, following a range of internal gravel roads and rougher double track interspersed with some twists and turns around trees on the grass akin to a cyclo-cross course. The course will not be technical and the whole prologue conducted with a friendly, welcoming atmosphere as we cheer on each rider around the course.



DAY 1: Simpsons Gap loop

When: Thursday 21st August. Wave starts from 1:30PM.

Total Distance: 47km. 210m ascent. [Ride with GPS map and profile HERE.](#)

Start Line: Next to the Red Centre BMX Track, Blatherskite Park (5km south of The Mercure). [Red Centre BMX on Google Maps.](#)

Finish Line: At our pop up bar on 'Flagon Hill' – Larapinta Dr (6km west of Mercure). [Located here on Google Maps.](#)

Day 1 bag transfer: We will receive items at the day 1 start line to be taken to the day 1 finish (eg. jumper, hat...). Just make sure your name / race number is marked on them.

Riding surfaces: 10km gravel roads, 21km asphalt road, 16km sealed bike path

Ride sheet:

- 0 - 30km pt: untimed segment - mix of sealed and gravel roads
- 30km - 47km: timed segment along the 'Simpsons Gap Bike Path' to the Flagon Hill.

Water points:

1. 11.5km pt at Firing Range – untimed.
2. 29km pt at Simpsons Gap – just before the start of the timed segment.

Course record: Karl Michelin-Beard 29.45, Shauna Frey 32.46

Start process: Riders will be set off in waves of 5 every 30 seconds. Start groups will be according to the results of the ITT Prologue. Fastest riders starting first.

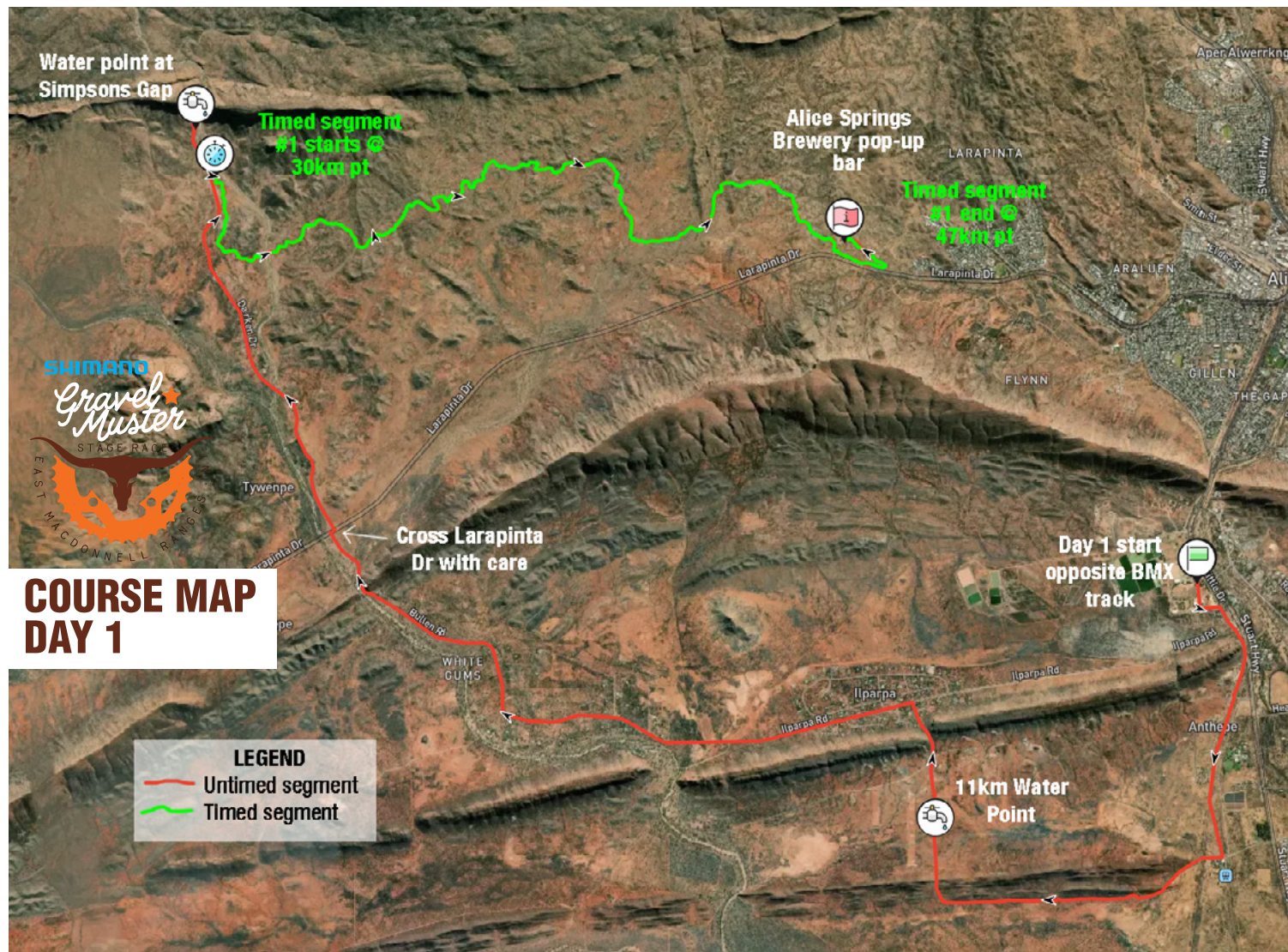
Stage 1 should be ridden as a warm-up and provides the opportunity to turn the legs over, check the local scenery and visit one of the regions iconic landmarks at Simpsons Gap, with a single racing segment at the end.

The stage will commence with wave starts of 5 riders every 30 seconds based on your time from the prologue, with the fastest riders starting first. (The wave starts are designed to spread out the field and ensure safety when everyone is eager to go!)

Once under way riders cruise south, going along some of the local gravel tracks at the base of the range. You'll change from one side of the ridge to the other via Honeymoon Gap and continue on asphalt to the impressive Simpsons Gap, all in a non-competitive, social atmosphere. (We strongly encourage you to walk the 500m to Simpsons Gap because this is one of the region's most spectacular natural landforms)

Day 1's timed segment is along the sealed Simpson's Gap Bike Path that weaves through the bushland well away from any roads or urban environments towards Alice Springs before a final 1km gravel kicker to the top of Flagon Hill. Riders start the segment whenever you like and may race solos or in groups. Note, the bike path is open to the general public and other cycle users, so please ride with care. Note the final hill to the finish may require a short section of hike a bike!!

We'll set up the Alice Springs Brewery pop-up bar on Flagon Hill and share a free beer or two as we watch the sun going down and celebrate day 1 being done.



*This is Simpsons Gap
- just a bit past the car
park and the water point*



DAY 2: The Garden Road

When: Friday 22nd August. STARTING AT 6:45am

Total Distance: 150km, 460m ascent. [Ride with GPS map and profile HERE.](#)

Start Line: Alice Springs Telegraph Station car park, 87 Herbert Heritage Dr. Search for [Telegraph Station on Google Maps.](#)

Finish Line: Hale River Homestead

Riding surfaces: 101km gravel road, 49km asphalt road

Ride sheet:

- 0km - 49km pt: untimed segment – sealed road.
- 49km – 97km: timed segment #1 (48km). Western end of The Garden Rd to the Pinnacle Rd water point.
- 97km – 116km: untimed segment (19km).
- 116km – 150km: timed segment #2 (35km). Eastern end of The Garden Road to Hale River Homestead and the finish line.

Water points:

1. 49km pt at Gardens Rd Junction – untimed
2. 74km pt at roadside – timed
3. 97km pt at Pinnacle Rd Junction – untimed. MAIN WATER PT: Lunch available here.
4. 129km pt at roadside – timed

Course record: Ritchie Porte 2:43.23, Ella Bloor 2:54.25 (course was 10km longer than in 2025)

Start process: Riders will be set off in groups of ~20 every 2 mins. Groups will be according to day 1 results. Fastest starting first.

Stage 2 is the BIG ONE – where heroes are made in the red dust of the desert. Today is all about becoming at one with the bike, the landscape and yourself.

The stage rolls out from the historic Telegraph Station with a series of wave starts where groups of approx 20 riders will commence every 2 minutes. Groups will be fastest to slowest based on the results from day 1. (This is to improve safety on the Stuart Highway. It is hoped that riders will remain in their groups until the timed section commences).

Once under way the stage heads 49km up the asphalt Stuart Highway where we will provide an escort and maintain your safety with lead and tailing vehicles in a non-competitive environment. This is a great way to start a solid stage, cruising up the main road as a peloton whilst the sun rises and the landscape reveals itself.

At the 49km point we turn east onto the famous Garden Road – a long, wide and flat ribbon of dirt leading over the horizon.... The Garden Road leads 100km east to our destination at Hale River and will be broken up with 3 water points and 2 race segments. The 97km mid way water point will have lunch available. All up, this is a long stretch so it will be worth getting in a bunch and power along this together, marvelling at the landscape and the trail of dust kicked up behind you as we race across the centre of the continent. Clip in, look up and enjoy the ride (it's amazing)...

#NoWaterNoWorries



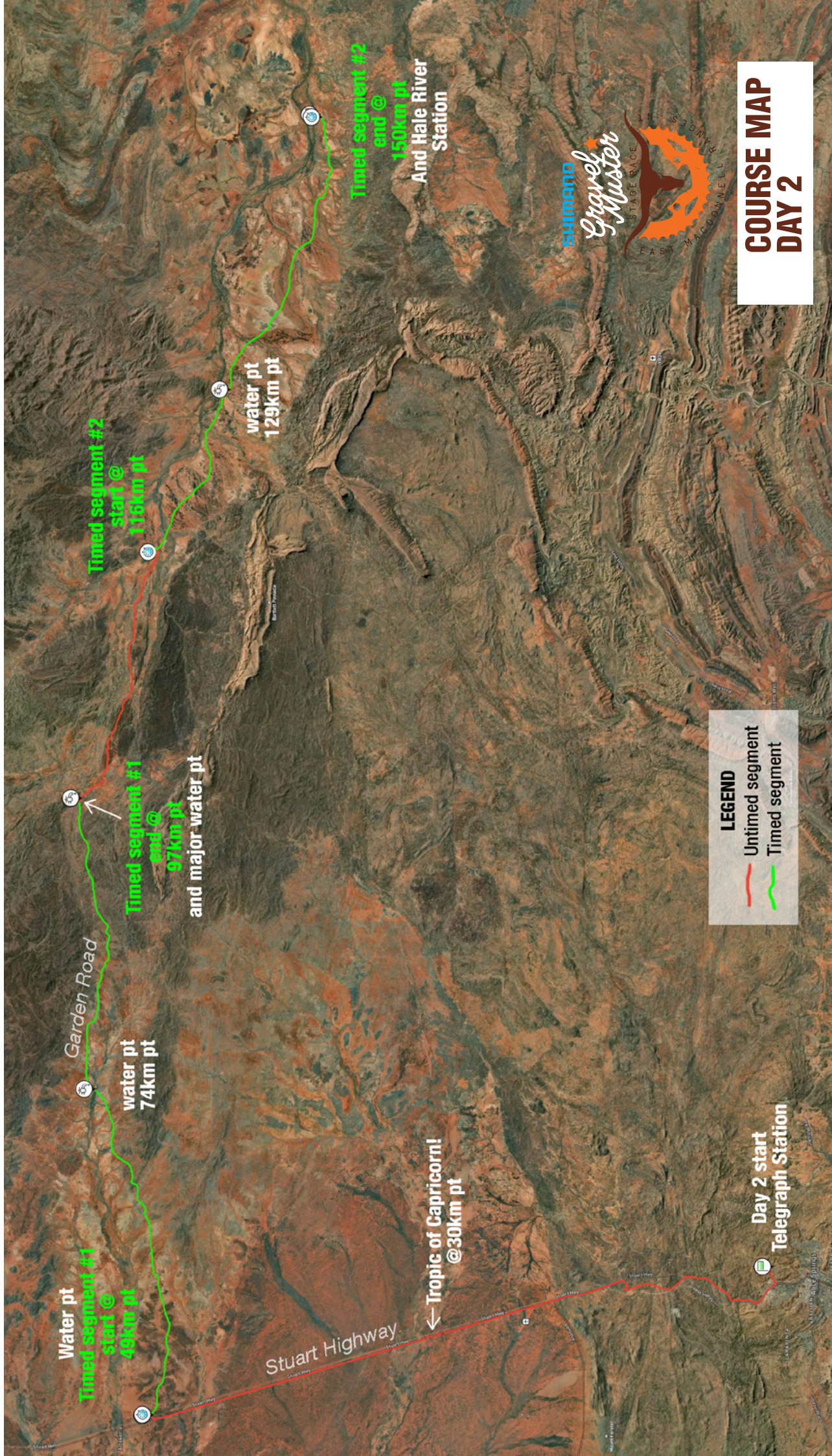
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DAY 3: Arltunga

When: Saturday 23rd August. STARTING AT 8:00am

Total Distance: 90km, 380m ascent. [Ride with GPS map and profile HERE.](#)

Start Line: Hale River Homestead

Finish Line: Ross River Homestead

Riding surfaces: 73km gravel road, 17km asphalt road

Ride sheet:

- 0km – 17km pt: timed section #1 – ends near the Arltunga Historic Reserve
- 17km – 35km pt: untimed section (20km) – past the Arltunga Pub where you can buy a muffin and a coffee!
- 35km – 69km pt: timed section #2 (34km). Into Trepina Gorge campsite.
- 69km – 90km pt: untimed section (23km). Back along the Ross River Highway to Ross River Station and the finish line.

Water points:

1. 24km pt at Arltunga pub – untimed
2. 35km pt on cattle plain – untimed
3. 69km pt at Trepina Gorge – untimed. MAIN WATER PT: Lunch available here.

Course record: Karl Michelin-Beard 1:26.00, Ella Bloor 1:34.35

Start process: Day 3 will commence with a mass racing start with everyone starting together.


Day 3 in many ways is the jewel of the event thanks to the diversity and sense of journey it provides through a range of breathtaking landscapes. Commencing with a mass start racing segment we ride past Ambalindum Station and its working cattle yards and then turn south to 'climb' onto the Arltunga Plateau. The racing segment finishes amidst the historic ruins and open air museum of Arltunga – which was one of Central Australia's most significant settlements back in 1887! (it is well worth stopping in to read the signs and imagine what it would have been like to mine for gold and gems here nearly 150 years ago!). Then it's a cruise to the Arltunga Pub for our first water point and social catch up.

(The Arltunga Pub is a classic from years gone by and has just been renovated with a modern touch. They will have beers, cold drinks, tea and coffee available to buy as well as pies, toasties, banana cake and more. Pull up a pew and enjoy the serenity!).

From the Bush Pub through to Trepina Gorge we ride into the heart of the East MacDonnell Ranges, with rugged mountain peaks looming up on the horizon and sheer rock faces and cliffs creating a vertical dimension in a very horizontal landscape. The 2nd timed segment commences in the plains and will see you racing across dry river beds and majestic ghost gums, past ridgelines and timeless rock formations. Take care turning onto the sealed Ross River Highway and the Trepina Gorge Rd as these areas see more traffic than we're used to. The timed stage continues all the way to the Trepina Gorge campsite – where lunch will be available.

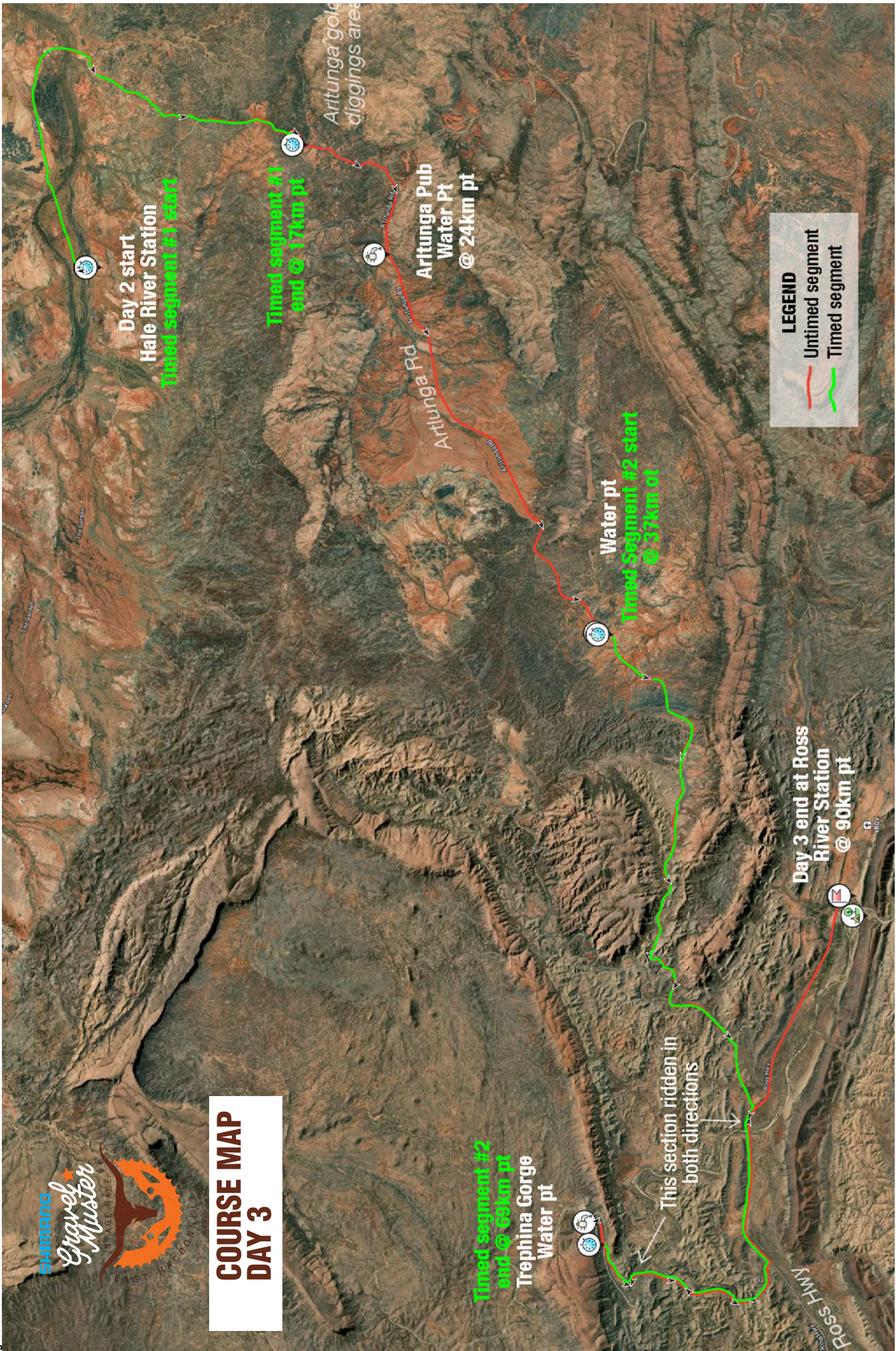
We encourage you to wander into the spectacular Trepina Gorge area and take in the rocky ridgelines over lunch. Then it's an easy 21km cruise from here to camp at the renowned Ross River Homestead.

*This is Trepina Gorge
- a short walk past the water
point at the road end.*





**COURSE MAP
DAY 3**



LEGEND

Untimed segment (red line)

Timed segment (green line)

DAY 4: The Ringwood Roubaix

When: Sunday 24th August. STARTING AT 8:00am

Distance: 94km, 310m ascent. [Ride with GPS map and profile HERE.](#)

Start Line: Ross River Homestead / **Finish Line:** Alice Springs Brewery (6km south of The Mercure)

Riding surfaces: 65km gravel road, 29km asphalt road

Ride sheet:

- 0km – 22km pt: untimed section – ends at the Numery Rd junction.
- 22km – 64km pt: timed section #1 (42km) – along the Numery Rd to the junction with the Ross Highway.
- 64km – 95km pt: untimed section (19km). Along the Ross Highway to the Alice Springs Brewery.

Water points:

1. 22km pt at Ross River junction – untimed
2. 64km pt on Ross Highway / Numery Rd junction – untimed.
3. 76km pt at Jesse Gap – untimed. MAIN WATER PT: Lunch available

Course record: Ritchie Porte 1:16.29, Ella Bloor 1:17.0

Start process: Day 4 will commence with a mass rolling start with everyone starting together.

Stage 4 provides another great journey from the gorges of the East MacDonnell Ranges back to civilisation and our ultimate finish line at the Alice Springs Brewery.

We start amidst the sheer ridge lines and peaks of the Ross River Gorge and then cruise south on the narrow Binns Track as it criss-crosses the dry Ross River. This section of the course is often sandy and loose but feels like an escape from the ranges as we head into the open plains below. We suggest you keep a high cadence across the sand and keep powering for the other side!

Stage 4's only racing segment can be a Roubaix-esque bone rattler that commences when we turn west onto Ringwood Rd. This long, straight section of road is the quickest way home but may be the roughest of the whole event with enough corrugations and loose rock to keep any rider honest (but we're hoping to get it graded smooth beforehand - no promises though). Time to harness your inner Wout Van Aert and apply the power while threading the fastest line. Respite comes with a return to asphalt at the 64km pt. Lunch is available in the shade at Jesse Gap which is well worth exploring and often has a permanent water hole in the gorge.

With racing done and very much dusted the course follows the sealed Ross River Highway, looping past Emily Gap and along the base of the range back into civilisation. Keep following the course route and roll under the finish arch into the Alice Springs Brewery beer garden to commence your celebrations! What an experience - well done!



COURSE MAP
DAY 4



LEGEND
— Untimed segment
— Timed segment

Day 4 start at
Ross River
Station

Day 4 end at Alice
Springs Brewery
@ 95km pt

Jesse Gap
Water pt @
76km pt

Water point
Timed segment #3
end @ 64km pt

Water pt
Timed Segment #1
start @ 24km pt

Riding along the
Ross River Highway

Nunery Rd



EQUIPMENT

Mandatory Items when riding:

- First aid kit (minimum contents: 2 x crepe bandages, 6 x wound closure strips, 1 x triangular bandage, 2 x non-stick wound dressing pads and a pair of surgical gloves).
- Safety blanket / space blanket.
- Red flashy light facing backwards
- The course route downloaded onto either a bike computer or a mapping app on your phone that works when you are out of phone reception. See page 11 for details.

Other gear to carry with you on the bike

- Water bidons – we recommend 2x 1lt bidons (or as big as you can fit). Think about having either a hydration backpack if you are a big drinker
- Sunglasses
- Sun protection for the back of your neck – either a mullet or a cycling casquette?! Other sun protection (like arm sleeves...) if you are especially susceptible to the sun
- Maybe a top tube bag or other small handlebar / seat post bag to help carry your on-bike food or any excess clothing you take off during the day
- Repair gear: It's important to be self sufficient out on the roads so you can help yourself (or others) in need. We strongly recommend carrying the following gear with you on your bike:
 - At least one spare inner tube
 - A pump and/or at least 2x CO2 canisters
 - Tyre levers, puncture repair kit
 - Multi-tool with chain breaker and split chain links
 - Tyre patches (look for Park Tools sticky ones) in case you do get a hole in the side wall that is too big for the sealant to seal and/or a tyre plugging kit
 - Chain lube (small container)
- If using your phone for mapping then we strongly recommend a Quadlock style handlebar mount for ease of use.
- Power bank can be useful for the long stages, especially if using phone for route navigation

BIKE SET UP SUGGESTIONS

We could write plenty of words about bike set up and what to bring – but let's keep it simple with these recommendations:

- Gravel bikes. This is what gravel bikes are made for (mountain bikes are also ok). But more important is that it is comfortable to ride! 4 solid days on the bike, in harsh conditions is going to knock anyone around – so make sure you love your bike.
- Tyres of minimum 38mm width - the wider the better (up to 50mm would be good). Definitely choose a quality tyre with strong side walls. Set them up as tubeless. We recommend either the Schwalbe G-One Terrabite or G-One Allround
- Gears: standard gearing (like a 2x with 34-11t or 1x with 11-44t) will be fine. There are no major climbs – the only thing you might have to contend with is rough terrain and a head wind...
- Carrying capacity for at least 2 water bottles and whatever extra items you want to carry

Mountain bikes and e-bikes are also welcome... bring what you've got (as long as its comfortable and reliable).

Bike mechanic and repairs

Alice Springs Bicycle Centre are our preferred bike shop and will be supporting us in Alice Springs. Chris will be set up at the Mercure during registration and be able to assist people after Day 1 from his shop in Alice Springs.

RACE RULES

See the complete list of race rules on the [website here](#).

CUT OFF TIMES

Course closes 30mins after sunset each day – 6:45pm. We will collect / assist riders at this time.



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EVENT MERCHANDISE

Please collect any pre-ordered merchandise at registration. We'll have a limited amount of additional Gravel Muster merchandise for sale in limited sizes at registration also.



25gm air cartridge \$5



Stubby Holder
\$25



Cycling Casquette \$30



Trucker Cap \$40



T-shirt
\$45



Hoodie
\$95



First aid kit \$20

Reminder: carrying a first aid kit and a space blanket is mandatory.

Space Blanket \$7



Muster Masters PAST CHAMPIONS

OVERALL MALE

O/A place	name	race time
1	Karl MICHELIN-BEARD	5:56:25.16
2	Mitchell ANDERSON	5:56:52.94
3	Mitch LORKIN	5:57:10.41

PRIME(18-39) MALE

1	Karl MICHELIN-BEARD	5:56:25.16
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VETERAN(40-49) MALE

2	Mitchell ANDERSON	5:56:52.94
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VINTAGE(50-59) MALE

7	Jason MORGAN	6:10:57.34
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MASTERS(60+) MALE

25	Nigel LETTY	7:36:02.07
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OVERALL FEMALE

O/A place	name	race time
1	Ella BLOOR	6:19:40.94
2	Shauna FREY	6:52:21.87
3	Imogen SMITH	7:11:20.50

PRIME(18-39) FEMALE

8	Ella BLOOR	6:19:40.94
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VETERAN(40-49) FEMALE

21	Imogen SMITH	7:11:20.50
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VINTAGE(50-59) FEMALE

33	Sherry EY	8:07:19.36
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MASTERS(60+) FEMALE

36	Gabrielle HOWARD	8:19:13.03
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MERCURE

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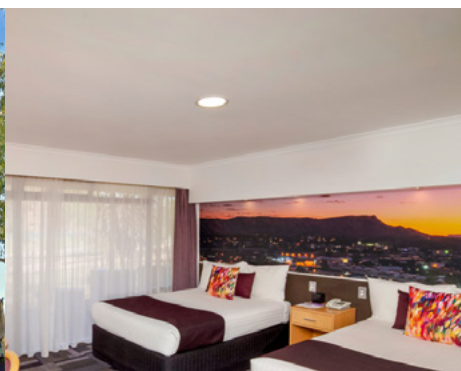
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Alice Springs Town Council
welcomes you with an
invitation to stay awhile
longer, explore your
magnificent country...